



Royal British Legion

Dereham & District Branch

1922 - 2022

Branch Meetings are held on 1st Wednesday of the month in Toftwood Social Club, doors open at 7.00pm and the meeting commences at 7.30pm.

We have a membership of 126 with an average of 30 attending the Branch meeting. It would be good to see more of you there.

THE BRANCH COMMITTEE

Elected at the AGM Nov. 21

President

Dennis O'Callaghan

Chairman:

Peter Loades

Vice Chairman & Newsletter Editor

Lynn Whitwell

lynn.whitwell@btinternet.com

Secretary:

David Whitehead 07934430143

Yted@hotmail.com

Treasurer:

Nick Smith

Membership Secretary

Marjorie King

Entertainment

Marion Tombling

Standard Bearer

Les Dunger

Poppy Appeal Organiser

Peter Whitwell 01953 850499

Member

Maurice Tombling

THE BRANCH CELEBRATES 100th ANNIVERSARY

On Wednesday 19th January members attended a celebratory lunch at the Café Verdi in Mattishall exactly 100 years to the day since the Branch was established.

Members were welcomed with a celebratory drink, enjoyed good food and pleasant company with the lunch ending on a very happy note with a few jokes from Colin Burleigh.

Included in his address President, Dennis O'Callaghan said that since the Branch's inception 100 years ago there had been another world war and many other conflicts. However, with the generous spirit of the men and women involved in fulfilling those original aims of Field Marshal Douglas Haig and Mr T F Lister, we should continue for another 100 years living up to the Royal British Legion motto "Service not Self".

The Branch Standard now has a banner signifying the 100th anniversary of the Branch.

At the Branch meeting in February the 100th anniversary was further celebrated with the Chairman, Peter Loades, cutting a celebration cake appropriately decorated with poppies.

A letter has been received from George Freeman, MP congratulating the Branch on 100 years and thanking members for the work they do for the community.

The Remembrance Parade was very well attended by the townspeople of Dereham with Lynn Whitwell, Vice Chairman laying the wreath on behalf of members of the Branch. Standard bearers from The Royal British Legion Dereham (Les Dunger), Wymondham (Pete Howes), Shipdham (Ray Dean), The Royal Anglian Association Dereham (Paul Woods), and The Royal Air Force Association (Peter Loades) took post around the war memorial. Also in attendance were representatives of the Cadet services, Brownies, Guides and Scouts. Parade Marshals were David Whitehead and Peter Whitwell. After the service in St. Nicholas's Church the Dereham Branch hosted a buffet in the Meeting Point.

Annual Poppy Appeal – The latest figure for the Dereham appeal is £17,019.01

The December Branch meeting on 1st December was an early start to the celebrations for Christmas with a buffet and entertainment. Those present enjoyed being entertained by comedian Colin Burleigh and music from keyboard player Bill Cunliff. The evening ended with a grand performance of the Sand Dance by David Whitehead and Peter Preston.

Chris James, handed the Secretary £1,000 money that she had raised for the Poppy Appeal 2021. In total, over the years, she had raised £10,000 selling her knitted poppies – a significant achievement.

The Memorial Garden now has a new gate at the front of the garden making access much easier. We thank Sid Walpole who kindly organised the production and installation of the new gate as a gift. If you need the key pad number to gain access please contact the Secretary.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

2nd March 2022 – Air Commodore Kevin Pellatt has kindly agreed to speak at our March Branch meeting. He is the Armed Forces Commissioner for Norfolk Military Covenant, the President of Norfolk SSAFA and the Vice Chairman of Norfolk Police and Crime Panel.

23rd April 2022 – The Branch will be at the Dereham Windmill Craft Fair, Greenfields Road, Dereham, space courtesy of organiser Kathy Lloyd. We will be promoting the Royal British Legion and having a table selling craft items. Monies raised will be divided between the Poppy Appeal and Branch Funds. Please come along.

If you are a crafter, whether stitching, jewellery making, woodwork etc., would you be able to donate an item to sell. Please contact Lynn Whitwell, Vice Chairman.

The Branch Committee are currently looking at organising events throughout the year, both fundraising activities, social activities and to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. If you have any ideas please notify Marion Tombling, Entertainment.

Another date for your diary:

22nd May 2022 – The annual William O'Callaghan Memorial Service will take place at William O'Callaghan Place, Dereham at 11.00am

Apologies from the Editor to Dennis O'Callaghan, President for the incorrect spelling of his surname in the last issue.

The 99th Annual Meeting of County Conference on 5th February was held online. Dereham Branch was awarded the Royal Challenge Cup for the largest increase in membership. The award for the Best War Memorial also went to Dereham.

The 100 club raises money for the Branch, for £5 investment you have the opportunity to win cash prizes.

If you wish to join please contact Marion Tombling, Entertainments

Congratulations to the Winners of the 100 club

December

Zoi Pearch £40

James Whitehead £20

Jenny Tubridy £10

January

Iris English £40

John English £20

Peter Whitwell £10

February

Nick Smith £40

Chris Walton £20

Andrew Felgate £10

The History of our Branch

Inspired by the 100th anniversary we are currently collating historical events relating to the Branch. Do you have any old newspaper cuttings relating to events in the past? Who was on the committee when you joined? Do you have any stories to tell about events held by the branch? If so please contact Lynn Whitwell, Vice Chairman

Royal British Legion Website

We now have a presence on the Royal British Legion Website this will be an opportunity for people to find out a little bit more about the Branch

<http://branches.britishlegion.org.uk/branches/dereham-and-district>

Vacancy for Branch Community Support Representative

We still have a vacancy for a Branch Community Support Representative. We need someone who is computer literate and with good communication skills.

The Community Support Service provides a most important first tier of support services offered by the RBL to Beneficiaries and is delivered by Branches with support from Area and Regional Teams. Key services provided through BCS include: • Home and Hospital visits • Telephone Buddy calls • Bereavement (Funeral representation i.e. Standard Bearer attendance) and Awareness events.

You would have a team of volunteer support workers to deliver the key services as detailed above, you would be responsible for receiving referrals for support from both the Area Team and the Branch and delegating these referrals to a member of your support team. You would also feedback the results of support give to Area and Branch. Training is provided.

Change of address

Don't forget to let the Editor know of any changes to your email or postal address. Also let the Editor know if you no longer wish to receive the newsletter.

HELP IS AT HAND FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO NEED IT.....

The Veterans' Gateway provides the first point of contact to a network of military and non-military organisations to help you find exactly what you need, when you need it. This service is also available to spouses and partners of veterans

They cover seven key areas:

- Housing
- Employment
- Finance
- Living Independently
- Mental Wellbeing
- Physical Health
- Family and Communities

Contact them around the clock on 0808 802 1212 or text 81212, visit online at www.veteransgateway.org.uk Get in touch via livechat- you'll find it on the website

The Veterans' Gateway is a partnership between The Royal British Legion, Poppyscotland, SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity, Combat Stress and service provider Connect Assist. They are funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund